



THE GRANGE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 43

June, 1989

A Word From Our Chairman

We hope that you like the newsletter this quarter and welcome to our News Editor, Connie Masters.

Jane Aitken is staying with us for another year in the capacity of Kettledrum Co-ordinator, which means co-ordinating and hosting catering events.

We hope that the report of the workshop and the enthusiasm that we have for it will allow the volunteers to feel more comfortable about asking questions, complaining and congratulating the day captains or chairman.

The formation of the ad hoc committee under the able leadership of Heather Kalil will research the use of artifacts and reproductions.

THE GRANGE VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE 1989-90

Chairman	Marjorie Thomson
Costumes	Jean Gray
Education	Anne Mercer
Finance	Carla Chow
Flowers	Emmy Lind
Housekeeping	Virginia Smith
Kettledrum	Nancy Lofft
Library (Book & Slide)	Anne Mills
Placement	Anne Hope-Brown
Program	Diana Weatherall
Publications & Research	Ann O'Brian
Publicity	Connie Masters
Special Events	Mary Aziz
Volunteer Training	Florence Watts

There are some new faces on the Committee this year - Anne Mercer will be planning our programs for schools, Diana Weatherall takes over Programs (luncheon/lectures and other ticketed events), Florence Watts will be looking after Volunteer Training, and Carla Chow has accepted the responsibility of the finances.

New Volunteers

It is always a pleasure to welcome new volunteers to The Grange group, and since the last Newsletter, the following have joined us: Marguerite Larkin on Friday, Shirley Moffatt on Tuesday, and Alberta Gray on Sunday. We hope they will find working in the house an interesting and rewarding experience.

Grange Volunteer Workshop "Do You Know What You Are Doing?"

All day captains have been given a copy of Christine Castle's report, so if any volunteer has not seen it yet, ask your day captain.

On the day following the workshop job descriptions for The Grange Executive Committee members were posted on the bulletin board in the staff sitting room. An outline of the functions of The Grange Board was also posted. At the last day captains' meeting, on May 24th, the revised booklet on the day captain's duties was distributed. We hope that the limits of each group's responsibilities will now be clear to all volunteers.

N.B. A follow-up session to the April 10th workshop is being planned for Monday, September 11th at 6:00 pm. Volunteers are expected to make every effort to attend. Supper as usual.

Grange Dinner Raffle

Considering it was operated on a restricted, trial basis and for a limited period, the first Grange Dinner Raffle was well-received. \$1,426.00 was raised, of which \$713.00 was contributed to the AGO's Stage III Fund. The winner was Leonore Jenkner of Gallery Membership, and for her and her guests, the dinner was everything that our advance publicity promised - "A Night To Remember".

Here are excerpts from the letter she wrote to Jane Aitken and Nancy Lofft: "a very special and unique experience"; "every detail added to the perfection of the whole..."; "the food was simply delicious...one could tell it had been prepared by mastercooks"; "a memorable occasion...gave us great pleasure to take part in such a uniquely Canadian experience in the heart of historical Toronto".

Another triumph for our Kettledrum Committee!

The Three R's For Historical Interpreters

- Restoration - the only word that should pass the lips of a Grange volunteer when referring to what was done to the house. Restoration takes a house's appearance back to a specific time in the past. It means precise duplication of historic features. Modern intrusions are kept to a minimum.
- Renovation - refers simply to the work that updates a house according to the owner's wishes. Can involve additions and improved utilities without regard to heritage character.
- Rehabilitation - not as drastic as renovation, not as pure as restoration. Returns a house to livability through repairs and upgrading of existing elements.

More Exposure for The Grange

Volunteers should watch for the June/July issue of the magazine, Century Home. It will feature a story on The Grange and on Jeanne Minhinnick.

Congratulations - and Congratulations again - to Marilyn Bouma-Pyper!

Marilyn's sensitive and elegant work on our new book, "The Grange", has won not one but two awards in recent design competitions. First it was the Ontario Association of Art Galleries that chose "The Grange" as "the best catalogue under 32 pages". Then the Alcuin Society chose "The Grange" as "best publication in the General Trade category". The Alcuin Society organizes the only national awards competition for excellence in book design.

Romance! Passion! and The Grange

Susan Howling, Wednesday Evening, reports:

On May 17th, 1989, American author, Jo Ann Ferguson (The Foxbridge Legacy") visited The Grange. As her novels fall into the Victorian romance category and she had heard of The Grange, she very much wanted to see the house, including the garden and outside exterior. An extensive tour was given (including the video) to her by myself. Ms. Ferguson thoroughly enjoyed herself and later said that The Grange would definitely make an appearance in future books.

Notes from our Historical Costumier

The Shift - or chemise, was the only piece of ladies' underwear for many centuries. A square-cut garment, scooped neck with draw-string to adjust decolletage, and with short gathered sleeves. In winter back skirt was drawn up between the legs, and slipped through belt for warmth. Shifts were made of cotton, linen or silk. Underpants, as we know them, were not worn.

Stockings - could be hand-knitted of wool, or cut of silk or linen and shaped for the calf. Held up by twisting the tops in a knot and rolling them over, or by a knitted strip tied in a bow.

Petticoats - from at least two to seven layers of cotton, linen or wool. Padded or quilted hems to hold out heavy winter wool. Some very beautiful quilted petticoats have been found of this period (19th century).

Jean Gray.

Wall-to-Wall Carpeting - An Anachronism in The Grange? Never!

How many of us have had visitors look askance at the wall-to-wall carpeting in The Grange, and question its authenticity in an early 19th century house? Well, no need to shuffle our feet and mumble. In England, the practice of "fitting a room" (the term wall-to-wall was not used) with a carpet was well-known in the homes of the wealthy by the early 1700's. We find Benjamin Franklin sending some carpeting from London to Philadelphia in 1758, and explaining in a letter to his wife that "it has to be sew'd together, the edges being first fell'd down and are taken to make the figures meet exactly." Another writer of the time remarks "It is the custom almost universally to cover a room entirely." It is understandable that the fashion would catch on quickly as the added warmth carpeting over bare floors gave to inadequately heated houses must have been considerable.

The first carpets brought to English Canada were imported from Britain where the carpet-making industry was flourishing by the end of the 18th century. Although solid colours were known, patterns - florals, geometrics, laurels - were the rule. The finishing touch was often a border in a contrasting pattern.

Fitted carpeting spread to less affluent homes with the invention of more efficient looms which allowed unskilled weavers to produce complex patterns. The invention of the power loom transformed the industry, and we read that "after 1850 practically every home had carpets from wall to wall."

Grange Library Recipient of Gift

Dorothy Dixon, Saturday volunteer, presented The Grange Library with the following books on the history of fashion:

Cunnington, Phillis. Occupational Costume in England, from the 11th century to 1914..... London, A. & C. Black, 1967.

Holland, Vyvyan. Hand Coloured Fashion Plates, 1770-1899... London, Batsford, 1955.

Laver, James. Children's Fashions in the Nineteenth Century.. London, Batsford, 1951.

Moore, Doris Langley. The Child in Fashion.... London, Batsford, 1953.

Many thanks Dorothy!

Our Summer Student

Welcome to Rachel Shain, who is studying Fine Arts at Queen's University. She will be helping us on Saturday, Sunday and Monday during the summer vacation. We hope that Rachel will be as pleased with her Grange experience as we are to have her.

Update on Dorothy Brown

Dorothy Brown, the talented creator of the charming Grange Christmas Raffle dolls, is coming along slowly but surely after her cornea transplant. We hope to have her back with us in the fall to resume her work on the statistics, and to help Carla Chow with the print out. She will be assisted in this quiet but boring job by Isobel Gill.

Of Special Interest to York-Toronto Historians

In Memoriam - another historic building dating from Toronto's early days has vanished, even though it was designated a heritage site. The Commercial Bank of the Midland District was built in 1843 on Wellington Street West, and Eric Arthur called it "quite the best of our old buildings in the Greek Revival Manner. Its demolition would be unthinkable." It was the first Toronto commission of architect William Thomas, who later designed the St. Lawrence Hall, and was thought to be protected when the re-development of the block was approved by the City Council a year and a half ago.

Watch for details of the fall volunteer training sessions and luncheon/lectures in our September Newsletter.

